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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/916,381	07/27/2001	Sadao Haga	71360-S6296	7830
21874	7590	10/28/2003		
EDWARDS & ANGELL, LLP				
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EXAMINER				
UMEZ ERONINI, LYNETTE T				
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
1765				

DATE MAILED: 10/28/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/916,381

Applicant(s)

HAGA ET AL.

Examiner

Lynette T. Umez-Eronini

Art Unit

1765

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 05 September 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-13 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 8-13 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☒ Claim(s) 8-13 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other:

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Applicant's election with traverse of claims 1-7 in Paper No. 7 is acknowledged. The traversal is on the ground(s) that the restriction is improper because the examiner failed to classify claim 10. This is found unpersuasive because claims 11-12 have been grouped as a method of etching silicon and are depended from claim 10.

The requirement is still deemed proper and is therefore made FINAL.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

4. Claims 1-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lee (US 6,284,712 B1) in view of Uchida et al. (US 5,307,296).

Lee teaches, "A cleaning a etching composition for cleaning and etching substrates comprising . . . silicon as a main constituent . . . (Abstract) and "The mixed acid etchant (MAE) consisting HNO_3 :HF:CH₃ COOH . . . is conventionally used for etching silicon layers, . . ." However, as such control is still not sufficient, single crystal silicon wafers are treated with H_2SiF_6 in its saturated concentration in the above mixed acid etchant solution" (column 4, lines 11-19). The above reads on,

An etching solution containing at least hydrofluoric acid, nitric acid and hexafluorosilicic acid, **in claim 1**;

the etching solution further comprising acetic acid, **in claim 5**; and

the etching solution is used for etching a silicon substrate, **in claim 7**.

Lee differs in failing to specify the concentration of the hexafluorosilicic acid being not less than 10% by weight; hexafluorosilicic acid is 15 to 40% by weight; hydrofluoric acid is 1 to 20 % by weight; nitric acid is 20 to 60% by weight; and acetic acid is 0.01 to 5 % by weight, based on the weight of the etching solution, respectively **in claims 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6**.

Uchida teaches, " . . . , in wet etching, the temperatures of the etchant and workpiece, the concentration of the etchant, and other conditions influence the rate of etching" (column 7, lines 5-8), which provides evidence that variation in the etchant concentration is a so-called "result effective variable."

It is the examiner's position that it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the claimed invention to modify Lee by using Uchida's etchant concentration, which has been shown to influence the rate of etching and to provide evidence that variation in the etchant concentration is a so-called "result effective variable" since it has been held that discovering an optimum value of a result effective variable involves only routine skill in the art. In re Boesch, 617 F.2d 272, 205 USPQ 215 (CCPA 1980).

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Lynette T. Umez-Eronini whose telephone number is 703-306-9074. The examiner is normally unavailable on the First Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Nadine Norton can be reached on 703-305-2667. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9306.

Lynette T. Umez-Eronini
ltue

September 27, 2003